



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

The **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is a not-for-profit database created in 2009-2011 to assist scholars, researchers, educators and students to discover, use, and build upon the Charlotte Mason Collection of archives, journals and books housed in the Armitt Library & Museum (UK). To learn more about this database or to search the digital collection, go to [The Charlotte Mason Digital Collection](#).

Your use of images from the **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is subject to a [License](#). To publish images for commercial purposes, a license fee must be submitted and permission received prior to publication. To publish or present images for non-profit purposes, the owner, Redeemer University College, must be notified at cmdc@redeemer.ca and submission of a copy of the context in which it was used also must be submitted to the owner at cmdc@redeemer.ca. Credit lines, as specified in the [License](#), must accompany both the commercial and non-profit use of each image.

Unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal nor may you make multiple copies of any of the digital images. Higher resolution images are available. [Low resolution (150 dpi), single copy printing is permitted: High resolution images for publication can be purchased. Please contact Redeemer University College in writing as specified in the [License](#) to request high resolution images.

While the document originals are housed in the Armitt Library & Museum, Redeemer University College owns the rights to the Digital Images (in jpg/pdf format) of the original archival documents and artifacts. The original Digital Images and database metadata are owned and maintained by Redeemer University College. Multiple images are bound together in PDF Packages. Click [here](#) to download the latest version of Adobe Reader for better viewing. In the PDF, click an image thumbnail to view it.

This project was made possible through collaboration among the [Armitt Library & Museum](#) (Ambleside, UK), [Redeemer University College](#) (Ancaster, Canada) and the [University of Cumbria](#) (UK) and with the financial assistance of the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada](#).

Need help? If you do **not** see a side-bar with image thumbnails:

Some of the PDF packages are large and will take some time to download. A very large PDF package may open more successfully if you download it first to your desktop. (From inside the database record, right-click on the link to the PDF package and save the link to your desktop.) Once it's on your desktop, you can open it up with a recent version of [Adobe Reader](#).

If you have a Macintosh with Safari, the default program to open PDFs is Preview, which does not open the PDF packets. Mac users need to download [Adobe Reader](#). If this cover page appears without a list of PDF files (either at the side or bottom of the screen), look for a paper clip or a menu option to view attachments. If you click that, you should see a list of the pages in the PDF package.

Viewing files with Linux: This works with the default PDF viewer that comes pre-installed with Ubuntu. While viewing this cover page in the PDF viewer, click "View" on the top toolbar, and check the box that says "Side Panel". That will bring up the side panel. The side panel will show only this cover page. Click the 'arrow' at the top of the side panel, and it will give you the option to view "attachments." If you click that, you should see a list of PDF files, which are the pages in the PDF package.

THE MENTAL AND MORAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

BY JAMES WELTON, M.A.

(Continued from page 172).

In the first of these two lectures I asked you to accept as the ultimate end of education the formation of the good character, because on this depends whether or not the training we give our children is really a training for life. For in life character is all important. Without good character in its members the very bonds which hold society together would be loosened, social intercourse would largely become impossible, man would sink back into the savage. Social as well as personal progress depends on the continual raising of the average character of the individual members of the community; without increase in goodness all so-called progress is but a delusion. In accepting this as the aim of education, moreover, I briefly defined goodness of character as consisting in the willing performance of duty. The essence of goodness is the will to do what is right, just because it is right, and without regard to the pleasantness or painfulness of the line of conduct to ourselves. And this means that the good man is one who has identified his will with the universal good will which he recognizes as operative in the world. For there is no goodness except in so far as conduct is regulated by the man's own self. Man, in his very nature, strives to realize freedom. He is born potentially free, but he finds his freedom continually interfered with by the actions of others as well as by the invariable laws of the material universe. So long as his conduct is determined by conditions external to himself it is not truly moral conduct, for it is not the expression of the man's own self. Moral

conduct is that for which I am myself responsible. But I can be held responsible for that conduct only which springs from my personality. The "ought" in conduct extends just as far as, and no farther than, the "can." To say I ought to do that which is beyond my power is meaningless; duty does not demand the impossible. A clear grasp of this fundamental principle will make it plain that duty is, therefore, in one sense, relative to the individual. It is not relative to him in the sense that its determination depends on his own choice, or prejudice, or desire. No, it is absolute so far, that for any other person in exactly the same circumstances the duty would be the same. But it *is* relative in that only that is one's duty which is in one's power to perform.

This consideration is very important, for it enables us to reach at once the essential practical idea that the duty of a child is relative to its strength, and that duty does not, therefore, make demands upon the child equal to those it makes upon the adult. This we must continually keep in mind if we would truly and successfully train the good character. For the good character is a product of slow growth. We may, indeed, say with truth of children, what Pope so libellously said of women, that they "have no characters at all." The child is born with impulses and tendencies. In early life he has no settled principles of action. He has moral percepts, just as he has percepts of concrete things. In other words, he appreciates the right and wrong in single, particular, concrete acts of conduct, judging them by the standard supplied at first by his parents, and later by adding to that his knowledge of the conduct of others with whom he is brought into contact, especially those whom he regards with confidence and respect. The conduct of the parent, the relative, and the teacher, is the test by which he judges his own acts and those of others. And it is the outward acts only he can judge clearly at the very first, though a consideration of the motive in his own case soon forms an element in the judgment. "Yes, I did so and so, but I did not mean to do it," shows that the child, even at a very early age, is beginning to distinguish between the act as the expression of his own will, and the act as determined by external circumstances over which he has no control. But throughout childhood the judgment is individual; the moral generalization is grasped

only as embodied in particular instances, and its disentanglement from the particular instances is a gradual process. The child begins to notice the essential common moral character of certain acts, and to regard those acts as specially classed by those essential qualities. He groups his moral ideas in the same way as he groups his ideas of the material world, according to their most striking feature, but even when thus grouped they still remain long as particular ideas. The boy thinks, for example, of courage only as something which distinguishes and binds together all those acts which he calls "plucky." Of course, this grouping of ideas of conduct according to their moral quality can be facilitated by the parent, and this is, indeed, the object of the educative employment of stories from literature and from history.

But it must be kept in mind that the mere intellectual grouping of moral ideas will not, by itself, form character. Character is organized will, and it is of the very first importance, therefore, to evoke the child's will. The true moral education of every individual must be, at bottom, his own work; the parent or other educator can only guide and lead: as Professor Laurie says, "You cannot form character outside the will of the child." No doubt, if the moral instruction is well carried out, it is a powerful factor in accomplishing this, for sympathy—*i.e.* true interest in others—will be stirred up. And sympathy—using the word widely to denote all kindly feelings towards our fellows—is at the bottom of all desires for the good of others, in which desires and in the accompanying ideas of means to their realization must be sought the motive power of all good actions. Now sympathy depends on knowledge as well as on feeling. It is only as far as we can understand the circumstances and feelings of another that we can be said, strictly speaking, to sympathize with him. Hence sympathy grows with mental development, or rather, is one aspect of mental development. The child first begins to sympathize with his parents, and with the other members of the home circle. The smallness of the family circle makes this possible. "The family," says Mr. Mackenzie, "is like a burning-glass which concentrates human sympathy on a point." Even this restricted sympathy can hardly be said to be present in the very first years of life, for at that time all a child's desires are centred in his

own sensuous gratification. With reference to that he judges an act or a person good or bad: that is good which gives him pleasure; that is bad which causes him pain. At this time, indeed, the child draws no true distinction between himself and that which is external to himself. But as he advances in the power of discrimination he finds that there are other persons as well as himself. And this he largely discovers because their wills clash with his will; the free expression of himself—a self remember, which is as yet a mere bundle of impulses—is opposed by the power and desire of others equally to express themselves. And as these others are possessed of more or less organized characters, so their hindrances of his impulses are more or less consistent. In this he finds the rudiments of his conception of the law of duty—as an external but uniform demand on him to sacrifice his own caprices, and a demand, moreover, which he is generally incapable of resisting. But were not this appreciation of the external law of duty attended by the growth of feelings of mutual affection between the child and those who thus curtail his freedom of action it could never lead to a gradual but sure *acceptance* of duty by the child. It is because the child loves and trusts his parents that he accepts, dumbly and vaguely no doubt, but yet truly, the idea that in thus opposing his freedom his parents are seeking his true good. It is because he reverences them as wiser than himself that he equally vaguely accepts their judgment in this respect, and thus begins himself to desire that which they command; or rather, it would be more accurate to say the desire to obey their commands becomes stronger, more organized and more permanent than the transitory desires to do this or that which would be in opposition to those commands. And we have the beginning of the organization of character in this gradual establishment of a wide reading general idea of conduct; viz., of conduct in conformity to the parents' wishes. Round this as a centre cluster ideas of many acts in which that general idea of obedience has been realized, so that this central idea of conduct becomes stronger and stronger as it receives the support of more and more of the realized ideas of action of the child.

Thus we see that every fresh act of conformity to duty strengthens the idea of duty, makes it more wide reaching

in its application to conduct; *i.e.*, introduces more and more of unity both into the ideas of actions and into the actions themselves, which are the carrying out of those ideas. But this necessarily implies a fuller understanding of what is involved in the conduct thus conforming to duty. The test is applied to the conduct of others in real life and in story. And what must be the test? Obviously the morality in which the child is growing up. Actions are tested by reference to the standard set up in the child's mind by the conduct and by the commands and expressed opinions of those with whom he is brought into closest contact. And this testing enlarges the ideas of the moral qualities those actions embody. But duties are still throughout boyhood and girlhood regarded as more or less external calls, as expressions of a law external to the child's own will. The good boy or girl will have formed the strong and far-reaching idea of general obedience to those laws. But it is only with the progress of youth towards manhood and womanhood that such laws become really identified with the self and converted into principles of self-regulated—*i.e.*, of truly free-conduct. And then only is it that character may be said to be truly formed. For then wide-reaching maxims of conduct—harmonized together, and each regarded as the partial expression of a yet more general and far reaching principle than any of them, so that together they all form a true organic system of ideas—stand ready at the portals of consciousness to judge all ideas of action, to accept and carry out all these that are expressions of this system of ideas, and to reject all those which militate against and contradict it.

And now I think we are in a position to see what is meant when it is said that character is a bundle of habits. For, as we have seen, it is by the continual acceptance of the calls of duty in conduct that the idea of duty has gradually been developed. Conduct reacts upon ideas as well as carries out ideas. But duty has appealed to all of us many times under the same form; we have therefore formed the habit of acting in certain definite ways dictated by duty. So far the saying is true. But it must not be taken too absolutely. Character is not a *mere* bundle of habits, for that would reduce morality to mere mechanism. It is rather the

constant recognition of organized ruling principles of conduct, the following out of which gives to conduct that regularity which we call habit. But the principle must be supreme, so that if in changed circumstances it should happen—as it well may—that to act on the old habit would conflict with the principle, the power to break the habit must be available. Habit must be rather the expression of character, than character the petrification of habit.

Now, if character is thus the organization of the self—its ideas and feelings under the direction of the will to pursue a certain course—it is obvious that the more fully this organization is carried out, the more consistent will be the ensuing conduct. Thus we get the man of strong character, and every strong character tends to become stronger. For the continual realization of those ideas, and of those only, which are in harmony with the dominant system of ideas of conduct, makes that system more and more all-embracing, and gives isolated desires less and less chance against it. If the mind is continually bent in one direction it requires a considerable wrench to turn it in another direction. As it is difficult to believe any proposition which conflicts with our long-established system of beliefs, so it is difficult to act in a way which is opposed to an equally well organized system of ideas of conduct. The strong character is, therefore, the well organized character, and only with such a character can there be any security for consistency of conduct. But it is all important whether the organization be complete or imperfect and one sided. For it may be the latter. The organization may be centred round an idea which does not make for the highest development of the man's nature, and which is, therefore, non-moral, or even positively immoral. In this case we, with much truth, refuse to call the man truly free at all, for we speak of his ruling passion. And in so far as he fails to be free he fails to be a man. For example, all the energies of the miser may be directed to the acquirement of wealth; that idea is the centre of the system of ideas to which all ideas of conduct are referred; and, as a consequence only, or at any rate chiefly, those ideas of conduct have a chance of being realized, which make for that purpose. But in all such cases we have a deformed character. The true organization of the nature of any individual man must be that organization

which is centred round the idea of man's good; for the end of man's nature is necessarily to reach its own perfection, and the individual is perfect in proportion as he approximates to the universal idea of humanity. I do not mean that each individual is to consciously set himself to work to perfect his own nature. That would defeat its own purpose, for the very simple reason that no individual's nature is or can be confined to himself. A merely individual morality is a contradiction in terms. All morality is social, and it is only in seeking the good of others that one can find one's own good. Hence, then, we see the importance of not only leading children on the way of organizing their characters, but of leading them to organize those characters rightly. And here it becomes more apparent what is meant when it is said that in the ultimate analysis goodness coincides with wisdom. It is a want of true insight into what is man's highest good which leads to all partial, deformed, and lopsided organizations of character. On the other hand, the more complete is that insight, the more perfect and symmetrical is the organization. In brief, the more truly a man is wise the more is he truly good. And this brings us again to the point on which I enlarged in the former lecture—the importance of the subject matter of instruction in the formation of character. For it is only out of the circle of knowledge that ideas of conduct can be formed, and it is only when knowledge is organized that ideas of conduct can be systematized and brought into efficient relation with one ruling purpose to strive towards the attainment of a deliberately chosen end.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT NUTRITION.

ALL must rejoice at the many advantages enjoyed by our little ones in the present day. There is, undoubtedly, on the part of many, an endeavour to harbour in their children that *mens sana in corpore sano*, towards the attainment of which the *Parents' Review* has done such immense service. At the same time, there is just a little tendency to overdo the *mens sana*, at the expense of the *corpus sanum*. A great deal is now expected of our youngsters on the mental side, without a corresponding regard for the bodily condition. The most delicate of nervous mechanisms, and many of the specialised organs of sensation are, as it were, forced and hurried on, just at a time when every attention should be paid to the development of the framework upon which the special senses will have to act.

Man, it has been said, has so long forsaken the simple laws of Nature that it is to be feared that she has abandoned her charge, and left him under the control of that faithless guide and usurper to which civilization has given dominion.. We have, however, to consider man as he is, and not as he would have been had he never forsaken the rude paths of Nature.

Take the infant of the present day; the percentage of children who start the battle of life with the only natural food,—that from the breast,—must be very small indeed. Yet we know that no less than three-fourths of the deaths of children under one year occur in those brought up on artificial food. Great as are the risks encountered during the *première enfance*, they are greatly increased in those artificially fed.

Here then, at the very outset, we find an illustration of the danger to which I have referred. Unless this fact is fully realised we shall produce mere flowers which fade, instead of healthy natural plants, which alone can maintain the standard and value of the race.

I hold, therefore, that a time has arrived when it is incumbent on parents to make themselves acquainted with at